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## *His Finest Legacy*

Duxbury lost its No. One citizen when Percy L. Walker passed away last week. (May 1, 1958) for he was not only a community leader but a community planner with vision, foresight and courage that set him apart. In an era of instability and change, he stood solid and monolithic against any influence that would destroy the rural charm of Duxbury. He fought the good fight both as a member of the Planning Board and as president of the Duxbury Rural and Historical Society. He preserved the character of a unique community. He also gave character to it.

Born in Duxbury in 1874, he attended Brant and Stratton after graduating from Partridge Academy. As a boy he worked for the Wrights of St. George St. and he mowed hay on Powder Point when there was more pasture there than developed land. He played a good first base for the Duxbury baseball team and blew a tuba in the Duxbury band. He was a town police officer and for a time was a Mid-Western representative for the Steel Wire Co. When he married the former Grace Marion Delano 2 old Duxbury families were united.

His wry humor, logical and well ordered mind and his uncommon common sense settled many a thorny issue at Town Meetings. All these gifts he used to good advantage. He was the prime mover in piping town water through our streets in 1914. He told us once, with a twinkle in his eye, that he did this in self defense "so people on Powder

Point with windmills wouldn't call me at night and want me to make the wind blow." The leading advocate of zoning, he served on the committee that gave the town its first good zoning law after a previous attempt to enact one (1926) had failed. It is thanks largely to Mr. Walker that Duxbury has sounder zoning laws today than any other South Shore town.

With Benjamin F. Goodrich and the late Charles Clark he fought to maintain train service in Duxbury and he was chiefly responsible for inaugurating the bus service to Kingston during World War II. As chairman of the Planning Board he was articulately opposed to the State taking over Duxbury Beach. He was formidable. He was a person who won the respect of those with whom he differed.

Nationally known as a realtor, he could recall up-swing days when he ferried prospective clients in a horse-drawn sleigh. Once, when the sleigh was stalled in a drift, he unhitched the horse and pulled the sleigh back on the road. In 1909 he bought Joshua Cushing's real estate business and it wasn't long before he was recognized as a highly esteemed realtor who put the town's interests above his own.

The powerful impact he had on the development of Duxbury is his finest legacy. Duxbury has grown, but it is still a quaint, historical, woodsy-rural community. That was how Percy Walker found the town, and that's the way he tried to keep it.